

Quick Facts: Creating Routines When Parent and Child Both Have ADHD



Routines can provide a sense of security and reassurance for children and adults with ADHD. A consistent routine may lessen your anxiety because you know what to expect and it gives you a feeling of control. A routine provides structure and safety and eliminates your need to solve problems in the moment, resulting in less frustration and fewer meltdowns.

You can develop a routine by creating a weekly schedule for your family and posting it in a place where everyone can see it. This will help keep everyone on track by providing a good visual reminder of the week's activities.

More ways to provide routine and structure for you and your child with ADHD:

- Establish a consistent bedtime and wakeup time every day (even on weekends). A consistent sleep schedule can help boost immunity and regulate your mood. You will also be better able to manage your ADHD symptoms if you are well rested.
- Make time to exercise together as a family. Regular exercise can help you and your child better handle ADHD symptoms and relieve stress.
- Prepare healthy meals and snacks. Proper nutrition may help lessen ADHD symptoms and lower risk for many diseases. Create a plan for healthy eating by making weekly grocery lists and planning meals. Begin with small steps, like including more fruits and vegetables in your diet, or try eating out less often.
- Set and stick with screen-time limits not only for your child but for yourself. Screen time before bed can interfere with sleep. Keep track of your screen time, and schedule breaks if you spend large amounts of time looking at a screen.
- Provide clear, descriptive house rules and expectations. Post these rules where everyone can see them. This will help you consistently enforce the rules and show your child there is no room to negotiate.
- Use lists to keep track of things you need to do. Post your list someplace where everyone can see it. Be sure to check off items once they are completed.
- Prepare for the next day by setting out clothes and making sure everything is in your bag or your child's backpack. This will help mornings go smoother and allow you to get to work or school on time.
- Allow extra time for getting yourself ready in the morning. This will make mornings less rushed and will give your child extra time to prepare for the day as well.
- Make a visual list of steps to help you or your child complete tasks. Breaking a chore or task down into smaller parts will make it more manageable and easier to complete.
- Use online calendars to help you and your child keep track of projects and homework assignments. You can also set alarms or reminders to help you remember appointments and activities. Set timers to help you stick to a task. Timers are good visual motivators because you can see how much time you have to work or how long you have until a break. Timers also help children and adults with ADHD better focus on the task they need to complete.
- Practice self-care to help relieve stress with activities such as mindfulness and yoga. Self-care will enable you to better manage your ADHD symptoms and parent your child with ADHD. You will also model positive habits for your children.